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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

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Educational News and Editorial Comment

SUMMER SCHOOLS

The opportunity for summer-school work afforded teachers by all of the leading institutions of the country is one of the most impressive educational developments of the last quarter of a century. This year this opportunity seems to have been accepted by an unusually large number of teachers of all grades. The university summer schools report larger attendance than ever before, while the normal schools have reached an enrolment that is most impressive.

The following extract from an article in the *News Letter* of the State Normal School at Emporia, Kansas, gives interesting facts about several of the leading normal schools.

The summer session of the Kansas State Normal School at Emporia, closing July 29, was the biggest and one of the most successful in the school's history. Kansas took the lead this summer in teacher training at state schools, with 3,272 enrolled at the Kansas State Normal School as compared with 3,133 at the Iowa State Teachers College and about 2,400 at the Michigan State Normal College.

From August 1 to August 29 a special course is offered at the Kansas Normal School giving a chance for students to take work the entire summer. Four hours of credit may be received in the August term. Advance enrolment showed more than two hundred, with a probability of many more to come.

This is the third summer the August term has been offered. It started three summers ago with an enrolment of less than one hundred. Last August 215 took the work.

A number of the state departments of education have collected details about the teachers from their states. The most impressive statement along these lines appears in a bulletin issued by the Department of Public Instruction of Pennsylvania and is as follows:

High-water mark has been established in summer-school attendance in Pennsylvania, according to reports received by the Department of Public Instruction from the forty-one normal schools and colleges in the state conducting summer sessions. Nearly 23,000 teachers—one-half the teaching force of the state—are attending summer sessions in these institutions. Never in the history of the state—never in the history of any other state—have so many teachers enrolled for summer-school work. This is a magnificent testimonial not only to the Department of Public Instruction's new standard, but to the enterprising spirit of the teachers themselves.

Reports from all sections of the state are to the effect that the colleges and normal schools are overflowing, it being found necessary to organize extension schools at several of the institutions. The reports add that the finest spirit prevails among the teachers, who are grateful for the new vista that has been opened to them and for the opportunity to attain advanced standing in their profession.

Back of the movement which these and like statistics from other quarters report there is a genuine conviction on the part of the public that it pays to employ teachers who are intellectually alert enough to keep abreast of the times by attending summer sessions. The Bureau of Education has recently issued a leaflet entitled "Credit for Professional Improvement of Teachers" which sets forth in its first section what typical communities have done to encourage teachers to study during the long vacation. The full statement is too long to quote. The following extract is the first half page of a two-page account of the matter.

The plan of granting credit for attendance at summer school has been adopted by many school boards as a means of encouraging professional improvement. A bonus is sometimes granted for this activity, usually about \$2.50 to \$6 per month, which is added to the salary the year following the course; or a cash bonus of \$25 to \$60, and in a few instances \$100. In some cases an advance upon the salary schedule is granted in addition to the normal advance. The following extracts from school board regulations regarding credit for attendance at summer school will show the plans regarding this activity in a few cities.

Beloit, Wis. (Regulations not dated).—Fifty dollars additional salary paid at end of each year to all teachers having taken college summer term and who earn at least two major standings every other year.

Canandaigua, N.Y. (Regulations, 1920-21).—Double increment granted the year following attendance at summer school. Increment doubled for one summer session in each five-year period beginning with 1920. (Does not apply to probationary or three years of service teachers.)

Elkins, W. Va. (1920).—Six dollars per month the year following attendance at summer school in approved normal school, college, or university, with certificate showing that at least three subjects have been studied for a term of six weeks, and after one year's experience in Elkins.

Elyria, Ohio (1920-21).—Fifty dollars in addition to regular increase on salary schedule following attendance at approved summer school or summer session of a college or university, provided salary does not reach beyond maximum. (Applies to grade teachers.)

Hackensack, N.J. (1920).—Any teacher who completes satisfactorily an approved course of professional study amounting to at least one unit may receive, in addition to the normal increment in salary, an additional increase of \$50 the year following the completion of the course.

THE CHILD LABOR LAW

The Supreme Court of the United States declared in June that the federal child-labor law was unconstitutional. The chief ground for the decision was the invasion which this law committed of the rights of states to regulate their own internal affairs.

The secretary of the National Child Labor Committee, commenting on the decision, takes the following hopeful view:

The friends of America's children are not to be disheartened by the Supreme Court decision. Remember that for three years the federal government has been giving its protection to children in factories, mines, and quarries. The children who were fourteen when this law was enacted are seventeen years old now. This much is clear gain.

It is also encouraging that many states in which modern industrial standards seemed extremely remote six years ago when the first federal child labor law was passed have actually reached these standards within this period. The example of an eight-hour day and exclusion from dangerous occupations has been wholesome in many quarters. Six years ago, there were ten states that had no prohibition of night work in factories for children under sixteen. Now there are only seven such states. Then there were twenty-five states which did not have the eight-hour day for children under sixteen in factories. Now there are only sixteen. Then there were twenty-seven states that did not have the sixteen-year age limit for employment in mines and quarries. Now there are only six such states.

We hope the American people, instead of fixing their attention on the Supreme Court, will fix it on the 300,000 little children who have been enjoying federal protection during the past three years and from whom that protection is now taken away.

This decision means that in the states with lower standards than those provided by the federal law we may anticipate an immediate return to the employment of children for the maximum hours and at the minimum age the state law permits.

In Rhode Island and Delaware this will mean that the children of fourteen who have become accustomed to the eight-hour day must now adjust themselves to a ten-hour day and a fifty-four-hour week. In North Carolina they will again be employed an eleven-hour day and a sixty-hour week; in New Hampshire, a ten and one-quarter-hour day and a fifty-four-hour week. In Georgia they will work a ten-hour day and a sixty-hour week in cotton or woolen mills, while in other manufacturing establishments or machine shops they will legally be employed from sunrise to sunset. Our mines and quarries will again enjoy the privilege of employing child labor in Georgia, Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, Florida, and Missouri.

Of course we respect the solicitude of the Supreme Court for the preservation of states' rights. But even political traditions are not an absolute guarantee of national security. Mr. Chief Justice Taft says ours have preserved us for 150 years. The political traditions of Babylon, we are told, preserved it for nearly 2,000 years, and the political traditions of Egypt for a longer period. By comparison our own institutions are in their infancy and it might not be amiss for American statesmen to discover some way of avoiding the errors by which earlier governmental experiments have failed. It is not more important to maintain a sacred political tradition than to protect little children exposed to industrial exploitation.

This court decision throws upon the membership of the National Child Labor Committee the obligation to redouble its efforts to secure proper standards in the backward states but we have by no means abandoned our hope that the federal government will find some way of protecting those of its citizens who are denied civilized standards by their own states.

MACMILLAN'S JUVENILE LADDER LIBRARY

The Macmillan Company has recently published an announcement which has in it so much good psychology that it deserves recognition as a contribution to educational science. After pointing out the fact that mental development goes forward in stages and epochs, the circular attempts to classify children's books to match the maturity of the readers and explains for each step on the ladder the reasons for the selections made. The following extracts from the circular illustrate the methods of psychologizing.

The children of from six to eight live in a wonderful world of imagination, peopled by misty figures of good fairies, princesses, princes, and fuzzy humanized animals. It is their natural heritage, an inheritance handed down to them for hundreds of years until, at the present time, we have a vast storehouse of legends and fairy tales enriched by folklore from Norway, Sweden, Ireland, England, and practically all the other nations of the world. These tales are all similar in that the handsome prince overcomes the dragon and good conquers evil. The little folks of from four to six are eager to have these tales read to them and at the age of six or eight are ready to enjoy them by themselves.

From eight to ten or eleven is the transitional period from the old fairy tales to the classical myths and legends immortalized by Homer. At this time the children are studying the beginnings of mythology in school in connection with their geography and history. These stories will supplement their school work and give them an intimate knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Norse fables and a true sense of the simpler life of those days. These tales are told in an easy, connected way and are so full of breathless action that they will be read eagerly, and at the same time will lay the foundations for a broad, classical education. What a wealth of interest there is in the adventures of Heracles, Perseus, Achilles, and in all the Norse tales so interwoven with our own Anglo-Saxon literature.

It is usually between these ages that children's minds begin to broaden and their thirst for positive information increases. At this time they want diversified knowledge about many subjects and are ready to devour any and all books within their reach. School work has made them realize the untold riches and wealth of information and interest to be found within the covers of books. Stimulating books of travel arousing their interest in other lands and customs, good fiction, and Bible stories are all suitable, provided the books have been written especially for children within these ages. Tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, of Indians, and of heroes in history are read eagerly and acted out during play time, thus fostering a sense of chivalry, kindness, and generosity. The reading of these stories will gradually develop later into an appreciation of all the romantic literature and poetry of which the days of knighthood form the basis.

This is a time of tremendous moral, physical, and mental development. It is therefore important that the right kind of books be wisely selected. It is the period of adventure, the seeking out of new thoughts, new ideas, and new actions. Children chafe and fret at restrictions, always seeking a new way to release their excess physical and mental energy. The mind is as active as the body and needs the same scope and freedom for development. Stirring tales of adventure, courage, and self-reliance are greatly favored by both boys and girls.

THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

All educational reforms pass through four periods. First, the reform is undertaken timidly by the few. Second, the reform

becomes fashionable and is adopted by everyone, the wise and the unwise, the earnest and the flippant, the hard working and the lazy. Third comes the reaction. In this stage there rise up those who throw stones and other missiles and decry the whole project, saying that from the beginning the movement was ill conceived and destined to fail. After the third period comes a fourth when the reform becomes an established part of the school system in some form which the criticisms of the third period help wise leaders to work out.

The junior high school is now in the third period of its development.

School and Society published on August 5 an article by August Dvorak of the College of Education of the University of Minnesota which contained reports from several school systems which have become so critical of the junior high school that they have abandoned it.

The editors of the *Elementary School Journal* are in receipt of the following letter from Superintendent Blackmar of Ottumwa, Iowa:

In the June number of the *Elementary School Journal* you quote from the *Public School Bulletin* of Dubuque, Iowa, in reference to junior high schools. You also state in connection with this quotation that you published in the last number of the *Elementary School Journal*, without comment, a statement from Fort Wayne, Indiana, of the reasons why the junior high school had been abandoned.

In comparing the viewpoints of Superintendent Ward of Fort Wayne and Superintendent Flower of Dubuque, it might be worth while to note that Superintendent Ward has had years of experience with the junior high school while Superintendent Flower simply has a plan in his mind that he would like to work out. Superintendent Flower's observations on the junior high school will be more helpful to superintendents after he has had a few years of experience in working out his plan. Superintendent Ward calls attention to the expense of the junior high school. Since Dubuque is a city of 40,000 people and had a total public-school enrolment last September of 3,647, 550 of whom were in the high school, it may be that they can afford the luxury of a junior high school better than can some other cities.

A typical Iowa county seat town of 4,000 people maintains a junior high school on the same block with a senior high school. The ninth-grade classes in the junior high school are taught by the senior high school teachers in the senior high school building. There are about one hundred seventh- and eighth-

grade pupils in the junior high school, and they alone require the services of a principal and six teachers. That number of pupils would ordinarily require three teachers if put in regular schoolrooms. On the departmental plan four teachers would be required, while five teachers would give one hundred pupils excellent service with all of the advantages of departmental teaching and sufficient supervised study. The school board in this town found it necessary to economize for next year, and instead of doing away with the two additional teachers required to carry on the forty-five-minute periods with supervised study in the seventh and eighth grades, they reduced the salaries of all of the teachers in the school and lost thirty-one or thirty-two of the thirty-seven teachers. The difference in this school between the junior high school and the old-time grammar school with departmental work in the seventh and eighth grades appears to consist in keeping the records of the ninth-grade pupils with the seventh- and eighth-grade pupils instead of the tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-grade pupils, and in giving the seventh- and eighth-grade pupils a forty-five-minute period with supervised study by classes rather than by groups in a study room—and it costs two additional teachers for one hundred pupils.

Most of the articles written in favor of the junior high school appear to come from college professors and editors. Will some of the superintendents who have had experience with the junior high school and are enthusiastic over the results they have secured tell us why?

In large cities where seventh- and eighth-grade pupils are brought together with ninth-grade pupils in well equipped new buildings that are planned to provide for departmental instruction and up-to-date vocational training there appears an entirely different type of school from the one here described, but such buildings can be provided for seventh- and eighth-grade pupils without including the ninth grade, and who knows that the advantage of associating the ninth-grade pupils with the seventh- and eighth-grade pupils is sufficient to justify the expense of the additional teaching force required to provide the forty-five-minute period for seventh- and eighth-grade pupils?

CO-OPERATION IN SYSTEMATIZING THE WORK OF ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

The first yearbook of the Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association appeared just at the close of the last school year. It is a very stimulating volume of practical discussions by a number of writers who are engaged in the regular duties of supervising elementary-school buildings. This collection of discussions is very promising as a beginning of new things in the work of elementary-school principals.

Until very recently appointments to principalships have too often been matters of seniority. The incumbent reached the position at an age when vital energetic thought about school matters was a physical impossibility and when the established routines of life had so fixed ways of dealing with school matters that a study of new methods was never thought of. Such dependence on age and experience has had its day. A new day is coming. In this new day the principal will have to know what tests are and which ones he can use. He or she will have to know, as the year-book puts it, "the art of visitation." The principal will have to understand the way of helping perplexed teachers in handling individual cases of the unique type which appear in every school.

These new phases of the art of supervision cannot be drawn out of books on theory. They will have to be learned from experience. Not alone will individual experience teach the lesson, but co-operative experience will have to be drawn upon to round out the individual's view.

The purposes of the new department and its ambitions are stated by the president in the following paragraphs:

We expect to unite all organizations of elementary-school principals. Instead of having each struggling at tasks not known to others and perhaps investigating problems that have been carefully studied by other organizations, we shall make known the work of each to all. The department will become a clearing-house for all principals. It will save much duplication.

We propose to learn the present status of elementary-school principals. We expect to raise the professional standard to a higher level. This will be done by encouraging more men and women of high ability to enter and remain in positions as principals of elementary schools. We shall stimulate them to take higher degrees after having investigated problems for this organization.

We propose to hold two meetings annually. The summer meeting will put us in closer touch with the teachers. The winter meeting will put us in closer touch with the superintendents and other supervisory officers.

Our programs will contain numbers of sufficient worth to pay boards of education to send representatives to hear them. Organizations of principals will be encouraged to do the same. The inspiration and education will be worth more than the expense of these organizations.

Above all, we are united for professional advancement. Our problems have long been in need of the kind of collective study that we propose to give them. Problems of almost every other field of educational endeavor have been more carefully studied than have our problems. Now we have decided to set

forth the results of our own studies. We have some of the nation's greatest educators in our ranks, and we believe our task to be second in importance to no other.

The literature of the department, including the yearbook, can be obtained by addressing Principal John L. Bracken, U. S. Grant School, Duluth, Minnesota.

THE MERRILL-PALMER SCHOOL OF HOME-MAKING

In 1916 Mrs. Palmer, a citizen of Detroit, bequeathed her large estate amounting to approximately \$3,000,000 to a board of trustees whom she directed to use the money in establishing a school for the training of women and girls in home-making. This board appointed Miss Edna White in 1920 as director and has since been opening up various lines of activity.

The first work to be taken up was instruction in nutrition. Classes were organized for nurses, and publications were issued. Second, courses in home-making for classes of continuation girls and foreign women were organized. The third and latest enterprise is the conduct of a nursery school.

While the immediate effect of much of the work of this school is local, the publications which have been issued make it a national institution in its influence, and the nursery school promises to be an example of significance to other communities.

Two statements may be quoted from the circular issued by the school referring to these two lines of work.

The problem of general education in the fundamentals of nutrition was one of the first considered by the Merrill-Palmer School. The available material that was suitable for use in elementary schools was entirely inadequate and, since in the majority of cases specialists are not available, it seemed desirable to develop a plan whereby some instruction in nutrition might be given by the regular elementary-school teacher. In developing this plan a nutrition reader and an outline for teaching nutrition in connection with physiology were published.

One of the most vital and pressing problems confronting agencies engaged in homemaking education is that of developing better methods of training in child care and child management. But children will not be available for observation in developing such methods unless a situation can be created which furnishes unquestioned advantages to the children themselves, as well as

possibilities of training for the college or high-school student working on the problem. Furthermore, the expense of equipment for young children, and of the personnel required to care for them in large numbers has deterred many pioneers who doubtless saw the problem clearly enough.

The nursery schools of England, established under the Fisher Act, have made the best attempt at organized education for young children up to the present time. Accordingly, the director of the Merrill-Palmer School, Miss White, spent the summer of 1921 in making a first-hand study of the English schools. As a result, she was convinced that schools of this type can be made of very vital value to young children and at the same time used as training schools for young women. The modern home, in many instances, is lacking in equipment for the education of young children and needs to be supplemented. Furthermore, modern psychology is convincing us that the educational possibilities of these earlier years are greater than we had supposed and that character and disposition are profoundly modified by the experiences of the first few years. The supplementing of home education for young children by educational experts thus becomes an important development of the educational system. Miss White felt that the nursery school to be established by the Merrill-Palmer School might take one step beyond those of the English system. In England very great emphasis has been placed on health training and the physical care of the child. The matter of instruction by Montessori and kindergarten methods has by no means been neglected, but it seemed possible to make a further contribution to our knowledge of the mental development of young children and to our methods of training mind, character and personality.

THE PLATOON SYSTEM IN DENVER

The following article is quoted from the *Denver School Review*.

The Webster School has been trying out a modification of the platoon system. So far it has succeeded far beyond our hopes.

This system is a two-group plan that begins with the IA and runs through the VIA. In the group called "academic" are the formal subjects which are best taught in smaller classes. In the group called "special" are music, art, home-training, library, physical education, and auditorium periods in which large classes are handled. The groups alternate throughout the day. A typical program is for Platoon 1 to have academic work from 9 to 10:30 A.M. and from 1:00 to 2:30 P.M. in the home room with the home room teacher for the common branches and the special subjects from 10:30 to 12 P.M. and from 2:30 to 4:00 in departmental rooms for thirty-minute periods under specially trained teachers for each subject.

Platoon 2 reverses the order.

Each teacher has two half-hour relief periods.

"The home room is the regular schoolroom home of the pupil. The home-room teacher is responsible for his attendance, conduct, and scholarship.

She not only has him under her direct control three hours of the day and exerts the same type of influence over him that the teacher has always exerted in the traditional school, but also co-operates with the other teachers in planning his work, keeps in touch with his progress and conduct, and communicates with his parents in all matters in which the co-operation of the home and school is necessary."

Home-room teachers soon specialize in the formal subjects.

Some have the idea that this program shortens the time for academic work. It does just the opposite. The library periods add 150 minutes a week for English and reading. The other departments give at least a period a week to one of the other subjects, such as visual education in geography, personal and community hygiene, civics, nature study, history, etc.

With the home-room teacher co-operating and planning with the departmental teachers, projects covering all the work can be carried out much easier and more efficiently.

The time allotment for music has been doubled, so that much more appreciation work may be done.

Weaving, basketry, and clay modeling have been added to the art course.

The library is organized similarly to the juvenile department of the public library. Time is allowed for dramatization, story telling, and appreciation lessons.

The auditorium activities take care of those things that bring out a "consciousness of social relationships" and teach the children "how to act and re-act among their companions." The spirit and freedom of a public gathering prevail in these classes. Health, civic ideals, use of leisure time, worthy home membership, visual education, dramatizations, current events, Americanization and numerous other subjects are on these programs.

The following types of activities are being tried out in home training work: diatetics, sewing, home manual training, home furnishing and decoration, cleaning and dyeing, demonstration lessons in personal and oral hygiene, proper clothing, home gardening, nature study, Americanization, and home clubs.

The advantages of the platoon system for the Webster School are:

1. All regular classrooms have been taken out of the basement.
2. It is less expensive than the traditional system.

(a) It has increased the length of the school day from half sessions to full-day sessions for four classes.

(b) It has increased the length of the school day for all the other pupils from five hours to six hours.

(c) Two teachers less are needed.

(d) Two groups use the same textbooks.

(e) Fewer manuals, charts, and reference books are needed in the special departments.

- (f) Each teacher is working full time.
 - (g) All rooms are used every period of the day.
 - (h) It has increased the average number of pupils per teacher from thirty-one to thirty-seven.
3. It has added three new and much needed departments—library, home training, and auditorium periods.
 4. The time for music, physical education, and art has been increased.
 5. It allows for special teachers for special subjects and the progression of teachers in these subjects.
 6. The pupil's experience is broadened by coming in contact with several teachers each day.
 7. There will be more thorough training in the common branches because the number of subjects each teacher must teach is reduced.
 8. "It makes for better health by affording more exercise and frequent change of scene."
 9. In some ways it reduces the problem of discipline.